



DNI Clapper provides series of threat assessments on Capitol Hill

DNI Clapper provides series of threat assessments on Capitol Hill

February 29, 2016

Brian Murphy
ODNI Public Affairs

Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper approached the witness table flanked by the top leaders of the intelligence community to deliver information critical to protecting the United States. The series of worldwide threat assessment hearings delivered on Capitol Hill in February were likely Clapper's last before his anticipated retirement next year. The briefings laid out the many threats facing the U.S. and the "litany of doom," as the director referred to it, resonated throughout the hearing rooms and across the country.

As each hearing began, Clapper received bi-partisan accolades for his leadership of the Intelligence Community and his long service to the nation.

Intelligence Community leaders testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee (Photo: Brian Murphy, ODNI Public Affairs)

Before Clapper addressed the array of intelligence and national security threats facing the nation at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Feb. 9, committee chairman, Sen. John McCain, took a moment to recognize Clapper's service.

"I'd like to welcome back Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, and the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, General Vincent Stewart. As this is likely his final appearance before this committee at our annual worldwide threats hearing, I'd like to thank Director Clapper for over five decades of service to protecting our country," McCain said.

Senator John McCain, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee (Photo: Brian Murphy, ODNI Public Affairs)

"Director Clapper, in particular, we thank you for leading the men and women who strive every day to collect and analyze the information that helps keep America strong," McCain continued. "I thank you for being with us today, and I've had the honor of knowing you for a long time and I know of no individual who has served this nation with more distinction and honor, and we're grateful for your service and we know that that service will continue in the years to come."

During the afternoon session with the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Feb. 9,



DNI Clapper provides series of threat assessments on Capitol Hill

Clapper's service to the nation was once again recognized.

"I want to open my comments by recognizing the significant contributions made by you, Director Clapper, as the leader of this community," Sen. Dianne Feinstein, SSCI vice chairman. "You're the longest-serving director of national intelligence to date. And I think both the chairman and I remember when the DNI was developed and put into effect.

"Your capable stewardship of the community has driven it to be a more integrated and capable organization than at any time in history," Feinstein added. "So I want to personally thank you for the contributions you have made to this country's security."

Senator Susan Collins who was a co-architect of the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act which created the job of the director of national intelligence also thanked Clapper during the Feb. 9, SSCI hearing for his decades of service. "You and I first met in 2004 when Joe Lieberman and I wrote the law that created the DNI office. And I take special pride in the work that you're doing and want to thank you for all of your years of service," she said.

Senator Martin Heinrich serves on both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Sen. Martin Heinrich, of New Mexico, also made the point of recognizing Clapper and the efforts of the Intelligence Community, in general.

"I want to start by thanking our panelists for being here and for the continued excellent work that their respective agencies do every day in providing world-class strategic analysis and in keeping our country safe in a world of growing and complex threats that Director Clapper so eloquently laid out twice today," Heinrich said. "The work done by your agencies is critical and I want to thank the men and women of those agencies who continue to do excellent work."

Representative Devin Nunes is the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. (Photo: Brian Murphy, ODNI Public Affairs)

At Clapper's Feb. 25, appearance before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, HPSCI Chairman Nunes said, "Director Clapper, this is your last World Wide Threats Hearing with this committee. I'd like to specially thank you for your 55 years of service to this great nation."

Throughout the February worldwide threat assessment hearings, Clapper referred to the



DNI Clapper provides series of threat assessments on Capitol Hill

numerous threats facing the United States as a “litany of doom.” Clapper said during his testimony, the U.S. is facing the most diverse global threat environment – ranging from violent extremists to infectious diseases to cyber criminals – he has seen during his 55 years of government service. In addition to the long-standing national security concerns of international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, Clapper also addressed several emerging threats.

“I want to briefly comment on both technology and cyber specifically. Technological innovation during the next few years will have an even more significant impact on our way of life. This innovation is central to our economic prosperity, but it will bring new security vulnerabilities,” he said. “The Internet of things will connect tens of billions of new physical devices that could be exploited. Artificial intelligence will enable computers to make autonomous decisions about data and physical systems and potentially disrupt labor markets.”

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper reflects on the variety of threats facing the United States. (Photo: Brian Murphy, ODNI Public Affairs)

Reflecting on what was likely the final annual worldwide threat assessment hearing as DNI, Clapper said, “Although televised Congressional testimony – trying to answer questions fully and at the same time protect intelligence tradecraft from our adversaries, who also tune in to watch – has not been the easiest part of this job, I always appreciate the opportunity to talk about the incredible work being done by the women and men of the IC. And at the same time, the public discussions of the past few years have taught me that, while we have to protect our sources and methods, we also need to be transparent with the American people about the things we can talk about. Open hearings are an opportunity to do just that. I do have to add, it will be a lot easier watching next year’s worldwide threat briefings on C-SPAN as a regular citizen while wishing my successor well.”